CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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FINAL RECORD OF THE SIX HUNDRED AND NINETY-FOURTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 2 February 1995, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. Alessandro Vattani (Italy)

GE.95-60389 (E)

The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 694th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

I should like, first of all, on behalf of the Conference and on my own behalf, to extend a warm welcome to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic, His Excellency Jozef Šesták, who will be addressing us today. Last year, the Conference was honoured with the visit of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic, and the presence today of the Secretary of State is further evidence of the continued and abiding interest of his country in our forum. I am sure that the Conference looks forward to hearing his statement with interest.

I also have on my list of speakers the representatives of China and Egypt.

I am sure you are all aware that this will be the last occasion on which we will have the pleasure of having Ambassador Hou with us in this forum, since he has been recalled by his Government to assume new and important responsibilities in Beijing. During the five and a half years that Ambassador Hou has been head of his delegation to the CD, he has earned the respect, the appreciation, the friendship of all of us. I might even say that we have had the privilege of learning a great deal from him: his patient and skilful approach to problems, his humour and tenacity will be fondly remembered and will, I am certain, be a source of inspiration for all of us in the future. On behalf of the Conference I wish to extend to Ambassador Hou and his family our very best wishes for their continued happiness and prosperity.

Before I give the floor to the speakers inscribed on my list, I wish to inform you that, immediately following this plenary, I intend to convene an informal plenary at which we will first consider the request for participation by Cameroon in the work of the Conference and then continue our consideration of the draft Presidential statement covering the agenda and organization of the 1995 session. My objective, which I am sure is shared by all, is to finalize the draft Presidential statement so that the Conference may begin its substantive work without delay.

Allow me now to give the floor to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic, His Excellency Jozef Šesták.

Mr. ŠESTAK (Slovakia): Mr. President, allow me to express my conviction that the deliberations of the present Conference on Disarmament will, in view of their great importance, be exceptionally successful both as regards their course and their outcome. This conviction is warranted by your capability and experience. Let me assure you of the support of the Slovak delegation for your responsible work.

I am deeply convinced that, considering the efforts aimed at universal disarmament, the roots of any future success must be nurtured by creative ideas of the present. I feel authorized to declare that the Slovak Republic, from the moment it was created, is ready for meaningful cooperation within the Conference on Disarmament in the elimination of tensions resulting from excessive weapon build-up.

(Mr. Šesták, Slovakia)

The work on the comprehensive test-ban treaty was, quite understandably, one of the main issues of the 1994 agenda of the Conference and it will also be the centre of interest this year. The Slovak Republic supports the most expeditious formulation, conclusion and putting into force of the treaty that would ban all nuclear explosions once and for all without any exception. We consider the observance of a nuclear-test moratorium to be the main precondition for the above.

Slovakia views the talks on the test ban as closely interrelated with the forthcoming 1995 Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. In our understanding, the success of the review Conference is directly related to progress achieved in the negotiations on the comprehensive test-ban treaty. We consider the NPT to be an exceptionally important global mechanism for the solution of nuclear non-proliferation issues. The Treaty has played a positive role in the modern history of mankind. We support its unconditional extension for an indefinite time and achievement of its universality.

The Slovak Republic firmly condemns the use of nuclear weapons. It is, therefore, important that the countries which possess nuclear weapons give a legally binding pledge not to use them first and to abstain from the use or threat of their use against non-nuclear-weapon States that have agreed with the discriminatory character of their pledge in the interest of higher goals of nuclear disarmament.

An inseparable element of the set of nuclear disarmament issues is the ban on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other explosive devices. We are of the opinion that the appropriate forum for dealing with this problem area is the Conference on Disarmament.

We welcome any initiative conducive to strengthening the current legal mechanism for preventing an arms race in outer space. We share the opinion that, considering the technological advances, the time has come to contemplate the possibility of concluding a comprehensive multilateral treaty banning the deployment of weapons in outer space and putting in place an international mechanism for its observation. A milestone on the road towards guaranteeing the exclusively peaceful use of outer space could be the elaboration of a document which, in the form of a code of conduct, would prescribe conduct in outer space and provide for the exchange of information on all space-related activities.

An important contribution to the efforts of mankind to eliminate the abuse of the biological potential of the Earth is the decision to develop verification mechanisms for the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction. At the meeting of government experts on the verification issue, Slovakia presented its own document which was helpful for drawing up the basic list of micro-organisms and bacteria subject to inspection.

Current regional conflicts confirm the danger of uncontrolled stockpiling of conventional weapons and the destabilizing effect of this process on entire regions. From the time it was established the Slovak Republic has developed a

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transparent and effective control mechanism. Slovakia submits annual reports to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. To make the Register bring its expected effects, it is necessary to ensure its universal character and to adopt regional measures, based on non-discriminatory principles and criteria.

Slovakia took significant internal steps to speed up the solution of the anti-personnel mine problem. It is our belief that the international community should urgently proceed, in keeping with its supreme humanistic traditions, to draw up an adequate additional protocol to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious.

We are proud to note that no chemical weapons are deployed, developed or produced on the territory of the Slovak Republic and that, as has been repeatedly confirmed, we have no intention to develop, produce or otherwise acquire such weapons. Let me inform you that work is currently under way in the Slovak Republic on drafting a bill banning chemical weapons which, in conjunction with the expected ratification of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, will put in place the legislative framework for the fulfilment of undertakings resulting from the Convention.

The above facts confirm that Slovakia will continue to act as a stabilizing element of international relations and will contribute to creating an atmosphere of friendship and constructive cooperation among the countries of the world community.

The dissolution of Czechoslovakia two years ago and the creation of the Slovak Republic and the Czech Republic was praised by the entire international community for its cultivated, civilized and peaceful character. The settlement of relations between these two new countries, as regards the technical aspects of the division of the once common republic, could serve in our view as an example and it declares a high moral and cultural level. Evidence to this effect is also presented by effective work of independent diplomatic representations of the two new countries from the very first day of their establishment. They also contributed with their share to winning, from the very start, the recognition and complete political support that promoted their rapid and full integration into the international community. From this perspective, it is quite understandable that the Slovak Republic ascribes significant importance to the final solution of the issue of its membership in the Conference on Disarmament.

We seek this membership because of a unique situation of Slovakia which is given by its legitimate claim to membership in the Conference on Disarmament. It consists in the filling of the vacancy in the Conference on Disarmament which, in mutual agreement with the Czech Republic, can only be sought by the Slovak Republic. In the year 1993 all members and observers of the CD were informed about that fact also by the note of the Permanent Mission of the Czech Republic in Geneva.

(Mr. Šesták, Slovakia)

We also believe that the admission of the Slovak Republic to the Conference on Disarmament is appropriate in view of the current situation and considering the time that has gone by since the Slovak Republic became a Member of the United Nations Organization; it has demonstrated that it is a reliable element of this universal global international organization. I am mentioning this because the Slovak case seeking membership after the former Czechoslovakia is a specific case.

The Slovak Republic supports, as a matter of principle, all disarmament efforts and understands the exceptional significance of the Conference on Disarmament for the negotiation of disarmament problems. Slovakia fulfils, in a responsible way and in time, all its undertakings related to confidence- and security-building and to armament and disarmament control in the framework of universal or regional international arrangements and negotiating forums. Slovakia was among the countries which sponsored the United Nations General Assembly resolution on a moratorium on the export of anti-personnel land-mines and was one of the first countries to declare, as early as April 1994, a universal and unlimited moratorium on the export of anti-personnel land-mines. Moreover, I would like to state that, in a short period of time, the Slovak Republic actively cut down its armament production to unprecedented low levels. This step is the best evidence of the sincerity of the Slovak Republic's endeavours and a practical manifestation of the approach it takes towards the materialization of the striving of the international community for general and complete disarmament.

In view of the above facts we appeal to the members of the Conference on Disarmament to recognize the moral aspect of specific features of the circumstances under which Slovakia seeks to become a member of the CD and to manifest their positive position on its membership application. A positive decision of the CD which would make Slovakia take up the vacant position could contribute to strengthening the will to overcome the current deadlock situation. The admission of the Slovak Republic to the CD will create prerequisites for the country's active contribution and its meaningful participation in the work of the Conference. Its scope will expand by another full-fledged member. At the same time, this would adequately fill up the blank space left by the country which was one of the original members of the Conference on Disarmament and remove the doubts concerning the will of its members to express their positive attitude towards accepting this international reality.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the Slovak Republic for his statement and for his kind words to me and now give the floor to the representative of China, Ambassador Hou.

Mr. HOU (China) (translated from Chinese): Mr. President, first of all, may I, on behalf of the Chinese delegation, congratulate you on taking up the presidency at the inception of the 1995 session of the Conference of Disarmament? I am fully confident that as an outstanding representative of Italy and with your rich experience and extraordinary ability you will successfully accomplish this important mission. I am very pleased to note that the friendly cooperation between the Governments and peoples of China and Italy is further developing.

(Mr. Hou, China)

As the CD session begins this year, may I also take the opportunity to greet all the delegations present here? Under your guidance, Mr. President, the Chinese delegation will as always fully cooperate with other delegations in the joint efforts aimed at securing further achievements in all aspects of the CD's work this year. At the same time I would also like to thank your predecessor, Ambassador Sirous Nasseri of Iran, for his contribution in bringing last year's CD session into a smooth close.

Please allow me to avail myself of this opportunity to bid farewell and express good wishes to our colleagues who have recently left their posts here or are to leave soon. They are Ambassador Wagenmakers of the Netherlands, Ambassador Benhima of Morocco, Ambassador Tin Kyaw Hlaing of Myanmar, Ambassador Brotodiningrat of Indonesia and Ambassador Lampreia of Brazil. Meanwhile, I would like to extend a warm welcome to Ambassador J. Ramaker and Ambassador U Aye, who took up their posts in the CD not long ago, and wish them every success.

This year, 1995, is a year of importance which marks the fiftieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War and the founding of the United Nations. As the international community as a whole celebrates this historic date, it can never be forgotten that the twentieth century unfortunately twice witnessed world wars and that mankind suffered the unprecedented scourges of war. The protracted cold war afterwards placed the people of the world under the shadow of a nuclear war for too long. In the second half of this century the international situation has undergone profound changes. Nowadays, not only can a new world war be avoided, but the possibilities are also growing for the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons and for freeing mankind forever from the threat of a nuclear war. Hence the efforts for nuclear disarmament and for the prevention of nuclear war still remain the common task of high priority for the international community.

The Chinese Government has always stood for the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of all weapons of mass destruction. For this purpose His Excellency Mr. Qian Qichen, Vice-Premier and Minister for Foreign Affairs of China, reiterated solemnly the principled position of the Chinese Government on nuclear disarmament and made new proposals in this respect at the current session of the United Nations General Assembly. He emphasized that, in the view of the Chinese Government, a convention on the complete prohibition of nuclear weapons should be concluded in the same way as the conventions completely banning all biological and chemical weapons. With a view to ultimately ridding mankind of the threat of a nuclear war and gradually achieving a nuclear-weapon-free world, the Chinese Government put forward the following concrete suggestions: that all countries which possess nuclear weapons should pledge unconditionally not to be the first to use nuclear weapons and immediately start negotiations to conclude a treaty prohibiting the first use of nuclear weapons against each other; that efforts for the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones should be supported and that all nuclear Powers should undertake not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against any non-nuclear-weapon State or nuclear-weapon-free zone; that negotiations should be pursued earnestly with a view to concluding a comprehensive nuclear weapon test-ban treaty not later than 1996; that the

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principal nuclear Powers should implement their existing nuclear disarmament treaties as scheduled and go on to cut back their nuclear stockpiles drastically; that negotiations should be undertaken to conclude a convention banning the production of fissile material for nuclear-weapon production purposes; that the convention on the complete prohibition of nuclear weapons should be concluded under which all nuclear-weapon States should assume the obligation to destroy all their nuclear weapons under effective international supervision; and that international cooperation in the peaceful use of nuclear energy should be vigorously promoted simultaneously with efforts to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and to step up the nuclear disarmament process.

The above points make up an integrated and interrelated international nuclear disarmament programme and process. The Chinese Government is confident that in the twenty-first century mankind will certainly be able to eliminate all nuclear weapons completely and harness nuclear energy fully to enhance the welfare of all countries and peoples. China is ready to join other nuclear-weapon States as well as numerous non-nuclear-weapon States to blaze the way towards this lofty goal.

On the very first day when it came into possession of nuclear weapons China unilaterally and unconditionally committed itself never to be the first to use nuclear weapons and has since consistently called for the conclusion of an international treaty prohibiting the first use of nuclear weapons against one another by all nuclear-weapon States. It is obvious that currently the conditions are ripe for the negotiation and conclusion of such a treaty. China has formally proposed to other nuclear-weapon States that such negotiations should be started immediately and has presented a draft treaty to this end. We believe that the early conclusion of the proposed treaty will greatly reduce the danger of nuclear war and contribute to world peace, security and development. In this respect a new development is encouraging. In September 1994 the heads of State of China and the Russian Federation issued a joint declaration committing them not to target strategic nuclear weapons on each other. The declaration reiterated the undertaking of both sides not to be the first to use force against each other, and especially not to be the first to use nuclear weapons against each other. They also declared that each side would adopt measures so that strategic nuclear weapons under its control were not targeted on the other. It was indeed an event of historic significance for China and Russia, two nuclear-weapon States and permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, to solemnly assume the obligation not to be the first to use nuclear weapons against each other. We believe that this initiative will pave the way for the conclusion of a multilateral convention against the first use of nuclear weapons.

This year, 1995, marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the entry into force of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The NPT review and extension Conference is now drawing near. China holds that in spite of certain drawbacks the NPT remains one of the most universal and important international legal instruments in arms control, playing a positive role in preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and promoting nuclear disarmament. Therefore China supports the smooth extension of the Treaty and will participate in the review and extension Conference actively and

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constructively, making its own contribution to the success of the Conference. We welcome the recent announcements by Algeria, Argentina, Ukraine and other countries on accession to the non-proliferation Treaty.

The negotiations on a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty are a focus of the work before the Conference on Disarmament. China has all along attached great importance to and participated actively in the negotiations. The political sincerity and constructive position of the Chinese Government towards the CTBT negotiations is firm and unshakable and I would like to reiterate here that China stands for the conclusion of a comprehensive, effective and universal treaty banning nuclear weapon test explosions no later than 1996. We have noted with pleasure that in the past year, under the able leadership of Ambassador Marín Bosch, Chairman of the NTB Ad Hoc Committee, the negotiations have got off to a good start and have so far achieved promising headway with a substantive CTBT rolling text before us. Meanwhile, all the parties concerned have through their intensive endeavours demonstrated a positive and cooperative attitude in the negotiations. Here I would like to express our gratitude to the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee, Ambassador Marín Bosch, as well as the chairmen of its two working groups, Ambassador Dembinski and Ambassador Hoffmann, for their great efforts and valuable contributions. We believe that under the leadership of the newly appointed Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee, Ambassador Dembinski, the CTBT negotiations are bound to achieve even more breakthroughs in 1995.

Security assurances for non-nuclear-weapon States constitute another issue of importance and urgency on the CD agenda. As the Secretary-General of the United Nations said in his message to the CD the day before yesterday, "there is no objection, in the Conference on Disarmament, to the idea of an international convention to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons", and the solution to this issue should "fully take into account the legitimate demands of non-nuclear-weapon States for stronger international and legally binding security assurances". The Chinese Government fully understands and supports the demand of all non-nuclear-weapon States for security assurances. Therefore China has already unequivocally committed itself without any condition not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States or nuclear-weapon-free zones, and has proposed that international legal instruments to this effect should be concluded at the earliest possible date. China supports the position of the Non-Aligned Movement that security assurances for non-nuclear-weapon States should be settled through a legally binding approach. At present, an urgent solution to the issue of negative security assurances bears profound immediate significance. In line with such principled positions China, as a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, also adopts a constructive and cooperative attitude towards the appropriate settlement of the issue of positive security assurances for non-nuclear-weapon States. China has all along believed that security assurances, whether positive or negative, should be provided to all the non-nuclear-weapon States. It goes without saying that this standpoint means China is also forthcoming in offering security assurances to the non-nuclear-weapon States which are parties to the non-proliferation Treaty. Hence the Chinese delegation has demonstrated its support in a timely manner for the formulation of a draft protocol on security assurances which was

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proposed not long ago by Egypt, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Iran, Kenya, Mexico, Mongolia, Myanmar, Peru, Sri Lanka and Venezuela in the Conference on Disarmament. Today, I am authorized to reaffirm this constructive position of China. Thanks to the vigorous leadership of its Chairman, Ambassador Guillaume, whose active and enterprising spirit was highly appreciated, last year witnessed an NSA Ad Hoc Committee making further efforts and conducting plenty of work. We sincerely hope that substantive progress will be registered this year in this important area under the new chairmanship of the Ad Hoc Committee.

Considerable progress has been attained in the field of international disarmament and arms control after years of joint efforts by all States. Faced with the new challenges and opportunities in strengthening international peace and security, the community of all nations must continue to redouble its efforts. China, as always, will make its own contribution.

Mr. President, I would like to express my gratitude to you for the kind words you have just spoken about me. I take these words as an expression of friendship for my country. I myself have been serving as Ambassador for disarmament affairs of the People's Republic of China and head of the Chinese delegation for more than five years. Before long, I shall leave this post and return to my motherland. During these past five years I have had the honour to work with you, Mr. President, and the other distinguished representatives, and have benefited enormously from your rich diplomatic experience and outstanding skills and wisdom. In working together, all my colleagues and all other delegations, as well as the Secretary-General, Mr. Petrovsky, the Deputy Secretary-General, Mr. Bensmail, and other friends in the secretariat have lent me tremendous support and assistance, for which I express heartfelt gratitude. I wish all friends and colleagues here every success and I will also cherish these extraordinary five years we have been working together. I hope and believe that in the new international situation the Conference on Disarmament will play an even greater role in safeguarding world peace and international security. At the same time, Mr. President, I would like to assure you and all the others that wherever I go I will continue to work assiduously to serve the lofty cause of international peace and security and to promote friendship and cooperation among peoples of all States. I am grateful to you all.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of China for his statement and for his kind words to me. Our best wishes accompany him in his new mission to Beijing and I think I interpret the feeling of all of us around the table in telling him that we look forward to meeting him again as an old friend. Good luck. I now give the floor to the representative of Egypt, Ambassador Zahran.

Mr. ZAHRAN (Egypt) (translated from Arabic): Mr. President, I would like at the outset to congratulate you on taking up the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament, which you have done at a challenging and difficult time. I am confident that you will be able to steer the work of the Conference through the initial phase of its 1995 session with great wisdom, ability and objectivity. I would also like to express my gratitude to your predecessor, Ambassador Sirous Nasseri, the Permanent Representative of Iran, who presided over the Conference during its concluding phase last year in a

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most efficient manner. I would not want to miss the opportunity of expressing my very best wishes to all members and non-members of the Conference for a successful 1995 session of the Conference this year. I would also like to express my best wishes to Mr. Vladimir Petrovsky, Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, his colleagues and all members of the secretariat for all the assistance they have given and all the efforts they are exerting in order to step up our work at the Conference on Disarmament. I would also like to pay tribute to the important statement made by His Excellency Jozef Šesták, State Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Slovakia, a statement which contains many points which we are certainly going to study very carefully, and the statement of Ambassador Hou of China, which he has made to bid us farewell. And actually we found this statement to be a good contribution to the work of the Conference. We have also noticed that there is broad common ground as regards China's endeavour in the field of disarmament and our own endeavours within the framework of the Non-Aligned Movement, particularly those of Egypt. I wish him every success.

At our last plenary meeting we learned that the Permanent Representative of Mexico, Ambassador Marín Bosch, would soon be leaving Geneva, and I can only say that his presence will be greatly missed. The inspiring statement that Ambassador Bosch delivered before the plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament on 31 January is ample testimony to the commitment that both he personally and his country have always shown to the cause of disarmament. We are also going to miss the valuable contributions he made and the ties of cooperation and the spirit of cordiality which prevailed between us and a number of our ambassadors who have left or will be leaving Geneva shortly. I would like to mention in particular Ambassador Luiz Felipe Lampreia, the Permanent Representative of Brazil, who has become Foreign Minister of Brazil, and Mr. Brotodiningrat, the representative of Indonesia, Ambassador Tanaka, Ambassador and representative of Japan, and Ambassador Ahmad Kamal, Ambassador and representative of Pakistan. To all of them I express my full appreciation for the ties of cooperation which prevailed, and I wish each and every one of them every success in their future endeavours and future assignments.

It is Egypt's ardent hope that the year 1995 will be remembered as the year of nuclear disarmament. While commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, we hope that this year will witness significant achievements in the field of nuclear disarmament in keeping with the letter and spirit of the first special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament, held in 1978, particularly since we are about to convene the NPT review and extension Conference during this same year. It is only natural that the Conference on Disarmament should have an effective role to play in achieving this long overdue objective and these aspirations which have been with us for a long time. In this spirit, Egypt, together with other members of the Conference on Disarmament, has requested that an independent item entitled "Nuclear disarmament" should appear on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament in 1995. This would not entail any substantive changes to the agenda as it currently stands, since the issue of nuclear disarmament already appears in item 2 of the 1994 agenda in a secondary position as well as on the agenda of previous sessions. Making it an independent item would put it in the limelight and serve to illustrate our

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commitment to this objective and our determination to put it into practice, particularly since we have already agreed that this subject of nuclear disarmament should occupy top priority on the disarmament agenda. It would indeed be most appropriate for the Conference on Disarmament to establish in 1995 an ad hoc committee to cover the nuclear items on the agenda of the Conference, including the nuclear disarmament item.

Egypt continues to attribute high priority to the conclusion of negotiations on a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty. In this context, we welcomed the very positive announcements made in the statement of the Deputy Director of the United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, particularly as regards the need to conclude our negotiations at the earliest possible date and the decision by the United States to extend the voluntary ban on nuclear testing. We are hopeful that equal determination will be shown by all participants in the negotiations. Having been unable to conclude the negotiations on a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty in 1994, the Conference on Disarmament should spare no effort to ensure their conclusion at the earliest possible date in 1995. In this context I wish to reaffirm our full confidence in Ambassador Dembinski of Poland in chairing the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban during the 1995 session. The Committee, in our view, should start its work immediately without awaiting the settlement of the other issues pertaining to the Conference's agenda and its programme of work. We are confident that Ambassador Dembinski will spare no effort to ensure that negotiations in the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban proceed expeditiously and without delay.

Egypt also continues to regard the question of nuclear security assurances for non-nuclear-weapon States as one that should receive the attention it deserves. So far at the Conference on Disarmament this has not been the case and as a direct consequence countries which have voluntarily rejected the nuclear option continue to be exposed to a nuclear threat by the mere fact of the existence of nuclear weapons in the possession of other countries, especially neighbouring ones. Without the realization of comprehensive and legally binding guarantees to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, confidence in the non-proliferation regime is being steadily eroded, particularly on the eve of the convocation of the Conference for the review and extension of the NPT, a treaty which has suffered for over a quarter of a century from a serious loophole in the shape of its failure to provide such guarantees. We need to fill this loophole very quickly by concluding a contractual and binding international document to provide such guarantees. We have previously suggested that such a document could take the shape of a protocol to be added to the non-proliferation Treaty, or could take the form of an independent treaty. Thus you can see that there is a consensus of views between Egypt and China which was already expressed by Ambassador Hou a few moments ago. We also have to point out that the work of the Conference on Disarmament in this field has stagnated over recent years, and that no progress whatsoever has been registered. We wonder whether the Conference on Disarmament will be able to achieve a breakthrough in this field in 1995 with the cooperation and understanding of the nuclear States, particularly in view of the imminent NPT review and extension Conference.

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We also look forward to a rapid and conclusive halt to the militarization of outer space. We find it inconceivable that the aspirations of the vast majority of nations of the world for an exclusively peaceful outer space environment without any kind of military threat should be ignored by those few who perceive outer space as their exclusive military arena. The Ad Hoc Committee on outer space has so far been in a perpetual state of paralysis on this subject and we sincerely hope that a genuine political will will emerge on the part of all States, particularly those which possess space technology, thus allowing for real and comprehensive achievements in this field in the Conference on Disarmament, and that this progress will not be limited to the provision of confidence-building measures.

As we feared in 1991, when resolution 46/36 L was adopted at the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly, the question of the Register and transparency was not fully dealt with. Unfortunately discussions on the question of transparency in armaments have now reached deadlock. Since the item "Transparency in armaments" was provisionally added to the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament in 1992 Egypt has been an active participant in the discussions on this issue. On behalf of Egypt, I was the special coordinator on this subject during the 1992 session. We also took up the chairmanship of the TIA Committee in 1993, but very quickly we came to realize that the whole question of transparency in armaments was in fact limited to transparency in certain limited categories of conventional armaments only. We repeatedly indicated that a selective approach to the question of TIA could lead only to ambiguity and deadlock. This is regrettably what happened, and this is regrettably the situation in which we find ourselves today for the reasons which are familiar to all of us. Hence we were left with a "deformed baby", which is the Register established by General Assembly resolution 46/36 L on the premise and on the assumption that the Conference on Disarmament will study ways and means of enlarging it to cover stockpiles, national production, advanced technology with military applications and weapons of mass destruction.

Given the prevailing situation and the difference of viewpoints between member countries in this respect and the lack of common ground, we have proposed that the Conference on Disarmament, during its 1995 session, should appoint a special coordinator on this subject to study the possibility of identifying common ground in order to achieve some progress in the future in this domain. And it will be necessary for the special coordinator to find out whether there is a real desire on the part of all those concerned to deal with this subject in a comprehensive, balanced, objective and non-selective manner, or - if this is impossible - whether there will be no place for this item of "Transparency in armaments" on the Conference's agenda if the positions of countries continue to be as different as they actually have been during the past three sessions since 1992.

In the spirit of our desire that the year 1995 should be the year of nuclear disarmament, we consider that a ban on the production and stockpiling of fissile material that may be used in nuclear weapons would be an important step in the right direction, but it is not sufficient. We have to take into account the specificity of this subject. It is a well-known fact that dealing with this subject inadequately might not produce fruitful results. It is a well-known fact now that existing stockpiles of nuclear weapons are sufficient

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to destroy the globe several times over, and this is a fact which is known by everybody. It is only when this destructive power is contained and ultimately eliminated, only then can we say that real achievements have been made in the field of disarmament. It is therefore essential that our efforts should not be focused exclusively on the issue of future production. A ban on future production would serve only to freeze the existing situation and maintain the existing imbalance and maintain the threat to international peace and security. In order to be of true value for disarmament a treaty in this field must comprehensively ban production while taking into account the stockpiling and use of all fissile material including military and peaceful fissile material since experts advise us that certain fissile material intended for peaceful purposes could easily be converted to military uses.

These are a few observations I wished to make at the outset of this important session of the Conference on Disarmament in order to clarify the position of the delegation of Egypt vis-à-vis important subjects and topics which we hope will be given adequate attention by the Conference. We hope there will be sufficient political will to enable the Conference to reach positive results and to help realize our long-standing ambitions. It is worthy of mention in this connection that Egypt along with others will pursue its efforts to turn the world into a safer environment free from the threat of arms and in particular weapons of mass destruction, most importantly the most devastating ones, namely nuclear weapons. In this framework President Hosni Mubarak launched an initiative in April 1990, that is to say before the Gulf war, to establish a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. The first step towards the implementation of this proposal is the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East, which necessitates the adherence of all countries of the region including Israel to the non-proliferation Treaty and the placing of all their nuclear facilities under full-scope International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards.

As an African country, Egypt also hopes that the efforts that have been made over the past years in order to draft a treaty on a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa will soon come to a successful conclusion. Such an achievement will serve to illustrate clearly the efforts being made to ensure that our world will become a nuclear-weapon-free planet.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Egypt for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to me. My list of speakers for today is exhausted. Does any other delegation wish to take the floor at this stage? If this is not the case I shall, as I mentioned earlier, suspend this plenary meeting and convene an informal plenary meeting in five minutes' time.

The meeting was suspended at 11.15 a.m. and resumed at 6.25 p.m.

The PRESIDENT: The 694th plenary meeting is resumed.

We shall take up and formalize the agreement reached in the informal plenary concerning the request from Cameroon to participate in the work of the Conference during 1995. May I take it that the Conference decides to invite Cameroon to participate in its work during 1995?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: At this point I would like to inform you that we have done our work. Tomorrow the groups will meet so as to review with a fresh mind the results of our day's work and, at 11 a.m. sharp, we shall meet in this room so that we may formalize what has been agreed upon this evening.

The secretariat has informed me that the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Pakistan wishes to address the Conference on Tuesday, 14 February, a date on which a plenary meeting is not scheduled. I am advised by the secretariat that this sort of exception was possible on a previous occasion and this request has been brought to the attention of coordinators at the Presidential consultations yesterday. May I assume that this would be acceptable to the Conference?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: Does any delegation wish to take the floor on any other issue? This does not seem to be the case. I just wish to inform you that we shall meet tomorrow, Friday, 3 February, at 11 a.m. in this room.

Mr. YUMJAV (Mongolia): I asked for the floor only to announce that the Group of 21 will meet tomorrow at 9.30 a.m. in the Council chamber.

The PRESIDENT: The G.21 will meet at 9.30 tomorrow morning. Ambassador Ramaker, what about the Western Group?

Mr. RAMAKER (Netherlands): Mr. President, I think, once again, although this is a formal plenary, I would like to defer to a later time the opportunity to properly welcome you to the Chair of this Conference. I would also like to ask the secretariat, through you, whether the Western Group could meet tomorrow morning at 10 a.m. in room C-108, and, if this is agreeable to the secretariat, I would take it that this would at the same time be announced to the members of the Western Group.

Mr. BERDENNIKOV (Russian Federation) (translated from Russian): Mr. President, I too think that I will have another opportunity to congratulate you on taking up the post of President. For the moment, as Coordinator of the Eastern European Group, I would like to say that the Group plans to meet tomorrow at 10.30 a.m. in room I, if the secretariat is agreeable.

The PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, Ambassador Berdennikov, for your communication.

I would like to inform you that the secretariat, which has been working very hard these days, will be ready in a few seconds to give you the final text of the draft Presidential statement. So if you could be just a little patient, you will receive the document which will help you in your consideration within your respective groups tomorrow morning. For the moment, I think I have concluded and I thank you all as well as the interpreters for their understanding.

The meeting rose at 6.30 p.m.